

Message Text

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ACTION AF-06

INFO OCT-01 EUR-12 ISO-00 AID-05 OMB-01 CIAE-00 DODE-00

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FM AMEMBASSY LAGOS

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 3229

INFO AMEMBASSY ACCRA

AMEMBASSY COTONOU

AMEMBASSY LIBREVILLE

AMEMBASSY LOME

AMEMBASSY LONDON

AMEMBASSY NIAMEY

AMEMBASSY NDJAMENA

AMEMBASSY YAOUNDE

AMCONSUL DOUALA

AMCONSUL KADUNA

USDOC WASHDC

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E. O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: PGOV, PINS, PINT, NI

SUBJ: LOCATION OF NEW FEDERAL CAPITAL AREA ANNOUNCED

REF : LAGOS 1346

1. BEGIN UNCLASSIFIED. FMG ISSUED DECREE FEB. 5 (FEDERAL CAPITAL TERRITORY DECREE 1976) DELINEATING NEW 8,000 SQUARE KILOMETER FEDERAL CAPITAL TERRITORY SOME THREE HUNDRED MILES INLAND FROM LAGOS. SITE GENERALLY LOCATED SOUTH OF ABUJA IN SOUTHEAST PORTION NIGER STATE. FOLLOWING IS OUTLINE OF AREA AS DESCRIBED IN FEB. 6 PRESS. STARTING WITH IZOM (WEST AND SLIGHTLY NORTH OF ABUJA), BORDER LINE GOES WESTWARD TO POINT NORTH OF LEHU ON KEMI RIVER. LINE THEN SWINGS SOUTH PASSING CLOSE TO SEMASU, ZUI, AND
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BASSA TO POINT WEST OF EBAGI (PROBABLY ABAJI IN NORTHEAST KWARA

STATE). BOUNDARY PROCEEDS EASTWARD TO AHINZA AND BUGA (NEW PLATEAU STATE), THEN RUNS IN NORTHEASTERLY DIRECTION TO ODU, KARSHI AND KARU. FROM KARU, LINE FOLLOWS NIGER-PLATEAU STATES BOUNDARY TO AREA OF KAWU WHERE IT SWINGS WESTWARD ALONG NIGER-KADUNA STATES FRONTIER TO POINT JUST NORTH BWARI. LINE SKIRTS EAST OF ABUJA, CUTTING ON STRAIGHT LINE FROM BWARI AREA TO SOUTHWEST TO ZUBA (JUST SOUTH OF ABUJA) AND THENCE, COMPLETING THE CIRCUIT. ON DIRECT NORTHWESTWARD HEADING TO IZOM.

2. DECREE GIVES FMG ABSOLUTE OWNERSHIP AND CONTROL OF TERRITORY, PROHIBITING ANY PERSON OR BODY FROM CARRYING OUT UNAUTHORIZED DEVELOPMENT ACTIVITIES IN IT. THOSE PRESENTLY INHABITING THE AREA WILL BE RELOCATED AND COMPENSATION WILL BE PROVIDED TO THOSE WHO OWN LAND INSIDE THE TERRITORY IF THEY SUBMIT PETITIONS WITHIN TWELVE MONTHS.

3. DECREE PROVIDES FOR ESTABLISHMENT OF "FEDERAL CAPITAL DEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY" WHICH IS CHARGED WITH PREPARING MASTER PLAN FOR NEW CAPITAL CITY AND PLANNING FOR DEVELOPMENT REST OF TERRITORY.
END UNCLASSIFIED

4. BEGIN LIMITED OFFICIAL USE: COMMENT: NEW FEDERAL TERRITORY IS LARGE CHUNK OF LAND (APPROXIMATELY 3,200 SQUARE MILES) INDICATING FMG INTENDS THAT FUTURE GOVERNMENTS SHOULD HAVE PLENTY OF ROOM FOR BUILDING LARGER AND (HOPEFULLY) BETTER LAID OUT CAPITAL THAN LAGOS COULD BECOME. CHOICE OF LOCATION SEEMS BE NEAT RESOLUTION TO PERCEIVED NEEDS TO SITUATE CENTRALLY AND TO AVOID AREAS SUBJECT TO MAJOR ETHNIC GROUP INFLUENCE. HOWEVER, BUILDING NEW CITY AND ESPECIALLY INSTALLING COMMUNICATION LINKS BETWEEN THIS RELATIVELY VIRGIN LAND AND REST OF COUNTRY WILL BE HUGE AND COSTLY TASK. OPPOSITION TO DIVERTING RESOURCES FROM OTHER PRESSING DEVELOPMENT NEEDS HAS NOT DIED, BUT CONGESTION IN LAGOS WAS BECOMING SO BAD THAT MANY PEOPLE PROBABLY HAPPY SEE CAPITAL MOVED ANYWHERE.

5. AS PROMISED, FMG HAS ACTED VERY QUICKLY TO PUT ITS BRAND ON SPECIFIC TERRITORY TWO DAYS AFTER MUHAMMED'S FEB. 3 ANNOUNCEMENT (SEE REFTEL) THAT CAPITAL WOULD BE SHIFTED. THIS DOUBTEDLESSLY DONE TO HEAD OFF LAND SPECULATION IN AREAS RUMORED AS POSSIBLE SITES (ABUJA REGION WAS ONE). FOR APPARENTLY SAME REASONS, GOVERNMENT HAS NOT STATED EXACT SPOT IN LARGE FEDERAL TERRITORY LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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WHERE CAPITAL CITY WILL BE LOCATED. REGARDLESS, IT LIKELY THAT LAND PRICE IN ABUJA AND OTHER SURROUNDING AREAS WILL SKYROCKET NOW. END LIMITED OFFICIAL USE.
EASUM

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NNN

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